notification dated 7.5.1992 prohibited mining operation without obtaining prior environmental clearance of designated authority. Mining leases in Gurgoan District have been granted by, the State Government of Haryana subject to the condition that the lessee shall commence mining operation only after obtaining environmental clearance from the designated authority. The mining leases for major minerals (leases more than 5ha.) for rest of areas have been granted by the State Government of Haryana subject to the condition that lessee shall obtain environmental clearance as per Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) notification dated 27.1.1994.

(c) and (d) The Minister of Environment and Forests has informed that mine lease holders/applicants have to make an application to the concerned authority alongwith an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Report and an Environment Management Plan (EMP) alongwith the necessary approvals/clearances obtained from the concerned State Government, No Objection Certificate/Consent to Establish from the State Pollution Control Board, Mine Plan Approval from the Indian bureau of Mines and such other requirements such as sanction/approval of the State Government for drawing power and water, etc. and approval from the Central Ground Water Authority if groundwater abstraction is involved for carrying out mining operation or if the potential mining operations could adversely impact the ground water regime of the region. Those fulfilling all the stipulated conditions are given an environmental clearance and the stipulated conditions are required to be implemented by the mine owner for the entire activity of the mine to ensure that there are no adverse impacts of the mining activity on to the environment.

Seeking advice from a German Company Regarding modernisation of Lignite Briquetting Unit

†1507. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Neveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) has sought advice from a German company on commissioning of modernised Lignite Briquetting Unit in the year, 1999;

(b) if so, how much amount was paid to the concerned company;

(c) what was the advice of the concerned company and when it was sought;

(d) how much amount was estimated to be spent on the commissioning of the Lignite Briquetting Unit at that time alongwith the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

expected income and environment associated advantages likely to be got from it; and

(e) what are the reasons for putting it to the back-burner?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total consultancy fees paid was Rs. 17 lakhs which includes to and fro fare for two persons from Germany and expenses in India.

(c) The consultant report was received from the firm on 31.12.1998 Measures suggested by the said firm are as under:

(i) Supply of low ash content lignite from Mine-I is to be ensured.

(ii) Crushing of raw lignite to 0-4 mm size before feeding to driers for which improvised crushers were recommended.

(iii) Rectification and modification in tubular driers for improving briquette quality.

(d) The anticipated cost for implementing the firm's recommendation in both the lignite briquetting plants worked out to Rs. 50.00 crores. However, after reviewing the reports and considering the various implication, the firm was requested to furnish a phased programme for minimum investment which can be implemented in one factory first and extended to the second factory if found effective. The same was submitted by the firm and accepted by NLC. The approximate cost for revamping one factory was estimated as Rs. 20.72 crores plus taxes and duties.

It was projected that B&C Plant may earn profits within 3 years of implementation in view of the increased revenues consequent to this quality improvement as well as higher production. However, there were not much of environmental benefits contemplated in view of these improvements.

(e) The implementation of measure suggested by the German firm was not found commercially feasible due to change in marketing senario. The availability of cheaper imported coal and coke posed severe competition in the market for NLC's coke products. Hence the project was not implemented.